

Recommendations



Overall Development Concept

The Resource Team identified six separate development focus areas within the city and recommends unique development strategies for each of these areas. The focus areas are described below and mapped in Illustration 1:

- **Conservation Areas** consisting primarily of flood plains, wetlands, wildlife management areas and other sensitive areas not suitable for development of any kind.
- **Rural Areas** where a substantial proportion of land is likely to face development pressures for lower density (one unit per two+ acres) residential development.
- **Suburban Areas** consisting primarily of the areas adjacent to the city limits of Commerce, where pressures for the typical types of suburban residential subdivision development are greatest due to availability of water and sewer service.
- **In town Neighborhoods** consisting primarily of the residential areas around downtown Commerce, where there is significant potential for redevelopment and new infill development.
- **Activity Centers and Commercial Nodes** corresponding to Commerce's downtown, major highway intersections and industrial areas. Each of these areas should be considered a "node" of higher intensity development.
- **Major Highway Corridors** including U.S. Hwy. 441 Bypass and Ga. Hwy. 98, which face the prospect of uncontrolled strip development if growth is not properly managed.

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The Resource Team recommends that new residential and commercial development in the city be concentrated in and around the Activity Centers and Commercial Nodes (which include well-designed new town centers at major highway intersections). New industries or other major employers should be directed to the existing abandoned industrial sites in the city or to well-planned new sites along the Major Highway Corridors as near as possible to the Activity Centers and Commercial Nodes. The Activity Centers and Commercial Nodes should be linked by attractive highways (perhaps protected as Scenic Byways) and a city-wide network of greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists for both tourism and recreation purposes. Outside the Activity Centers and Commercial Nodes, every effort should be made to encourage and maintain the existing rural and scenic character of the community. This does not mean that no development would occur outside the Activity Centers and Commercial Nodes – but any new development should be designed to blend with the rural landscape that makes Commerce a desirable place to live and a unique tourist destination.

Recommended specific development strategies for each focus area are summarized in the following table:

Focus Area	Development Strategy
Conservation Areas	Maintain rural character by not allowing <i>any</i> new development. Widen roadways in these areas only when absolutely necessary and carefully design the roadway alterations to minimize visual impact. Promote these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations.
Rural Areas	These areas can be protected by maintaining large lot sizes and promoting use of conservation easements by land owners. Residential subdivisions should be severely limited, but if minor exceptions are made, they should be required to follow conservation subdivision design requirements. Maintain scenic rural character while accommodating new residential development as “conservation subdivisions” that incorporate significant amounts of open space. Any new development should be required to use compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional rural character, and should not include “franchise” or “corporate” architecture. Widen roadways only when absolutely necessary and carefully design the roadway alterations to minimize visual impact. Promote these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations.
Suburban Areas	Promote moderate density, traditional neighborhood development (TND) style residential subdivisions. Each new development should be a master-planned community with mixed-uses, blending residential development with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses and services, linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips within the subdivision. Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character, and should not include “franchise” or “corporate” architecture.
Intown Neighborhoods	Vacant properties throughout the city in each neighborhood offer an opportunity for infill development. These infill sites should be redeveloped for new, architecturally compatible, owner-

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	<p>occupied housing. Neighborhoods should remain primarily single-family residential, and the city should offer assistance using resources available through DCA’s Housing Finance Division where needed to ensure that the more economically distressed neighborhoods become more stable, mixed-income communities with a larger percentage of owner-occupied housing. This will mean developing a customized revitalization strategy for each of these neighborhoods (and residents should participate in developing the strategy). The neighborhoods should also include well-designed new neighborhood centers at appropriate locations, which would provide a focal point for each neighborhood, while also providing a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, and similar appropriately-scaled retail establishments serving neighborhood residents.</p>
<p>Activity Centers and Commercial Nodes</p>	<p>Each Activity Center and Commercial Node should include relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment to serve a local market area. Tourist facilities (hotels, visitor centers, etc.) should be concentrated in the Activity Centers. Residential development should be targeted to a broad range of income levels, including multi-family town homes, apartments and condominiums. Design for each Activity Center should be very pedestrian-oriented with sidewalk requirements creating strong, walkable connections between different uses. Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear. Include direct connections to the proposed citywide greenspace and trail network.</p>
<p>Major Highway Corridors</p>	<p>Maintain a natural vegetation buffer (at least 50 feet in width) along major corridors. All new development should be set-back behind this buffer, with access roads, shared driveways or inter-parcel road connections providing alternate access to these developments and reducing curb cuts and traffic on the main highways. Ban all new billboards to protect scenic quality and public safety.</p>



Policy

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
1	Amend the city's Comprehensive Plan as needed to include goals, objectives and policies that promote the community's vision.	The Comprehensive Plan should address growing needs of the community and identify goals, objectives in order to develop projects and activities. Changes in development regulations need to be reflected in the comprehensive plan to ensure their legality.			
2	Development regulations should be modified to reflect the community vision and Resource Team recommendations.	Development regulations implement the vision. Changes in development regulations need to be reflected in the comprehensive plan to ensure their legality.			
3	Request a Quality Growth Audit of regulations for barriers to smart growth. This audit will evaluate local ordinances and make recommendation for revisions to make it easier for "smart growth" forms of development (like mixed-use projects, traditional neighborhood developments and higher density infill development) to be implemented in Commerce. ✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Smart Growth Audit	Identifies which ordinances, regulations need modification.			

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4	<p>Review existing development regulations and see how these can incorporate requirements for screening of parking lots, more attractive signage based on traffic speeds and road design. Create financial incentives (such as density bonuses and parking space reductions) for developers willing to go beyond the minimum.</p> <p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tools Redesigning Off-Street Parking Facilities and Density Bonuses</p>	<p>Some older corridors exhibit typical strip sprawl appearance with minimal landscaping, highly visible parking, and unattractive one story buildings and signage. Improve overall appearance of parking facilities. Provide shade in parking lots.</p>			
5	<p>Specify alternative parking arrangements for commercial development/flexible parking requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative parking facility design may be required in instances where setbacks have been reduced and may improve landscaping designs. - Flexible parking requirements can reduce the amount of land required for development. <p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Flexible Parking Standards</p>	<p>To reduce the amount of land needed for commercial development. To increase site development flexibility. Increase landscaping possibilities.</p>			
6	<p>Develop Commercial Corridor Overlay zoning for major corridors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An overlay district can add existing development and design requirements along major commercial corridors. - An overlay district should focus on landscaping, site design requirements, access management or other issues that may be pertinent in a given corridor. 	<p>Improve landscaping. Provide for parcel-to-parcel access. Develop appropriate setback requirements. Better management of corridor aesthetics.</p>			

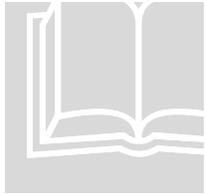
	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
	<p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Overlay Districts</p>				
7	<p>Develop Scenic Corridor Overlay zoning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scenic corridor overlays can be used to preserve scenic roadways, as well as limit the amount of commercial development along the corridor. - Limiting typical strip commercial would also allow the roadway to maintain optimal traffic flow. <p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Overlay Districts</p>	<p>To protect existing scenic entryways to the City of Commerce.</p>			
8	<p>Develop Historic Downtown Overlay zoning to encourage loft development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incentives may be offered through an overlay to increase the number of people living downtown and encourage residential development in downtown. <p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Overlay Districts</p>	<p>Existing zoning allows residential development, but does not encourage it.</p>			
9	<p>Create Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) zoning category or overlay district.</p> <p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tools Traditional Neighborhood Development - Comprehensive TND Ordinance and Traditional Neighborhood Development - Floating Districts</p>	<p>Would allow for new residential developments to reflect the historic character found in the City, replicating the historic neighborhoods in other parts of the City.</p>			
10	<p>Develop Neighborhood Commercial District applicable to neighborhood activity centers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community involvement should determine where such developments are appropriate and what uses are 	<p>To allow for the development of small-scale commercial, institutional, civic development in neighborhood activity centers.</p>			

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	desirable.				
11	<p>Develop effective Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning category.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PUD categories should include performance standards to ensure developments are appropriate. <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Planned Unit Developments</p>	Allows for innovative design and street layouts.			
12	<p>Create Traditional Mixed-use Zoning Designation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A traditional mixed-use zoning designation may be required to foster mixed-use development. Existing zoning categories mostly prohibit such development. <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Mixed Use Zoning</p>	Allows for innovative mixed use design.			
13	<p>Develop Conservation Subdivision Ordinance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conservation subdivision ordinances allow for cluster development. They should be located at the urban fringe and, when possible, permanently protected open spaces should be linked. <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Conservation Subdivision Ordinance</p>	Provides green buffer between existing development and undeveloped County. Contributes to community greenspace.			
14	<p>Include open space requirements in Cluster Zoning designation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clustering allows developers to build the same number of units under existing zoning while leaving a portion 	Provides community open space in clustered development. The existing zoning category does not include an open space requirement that is typical in			

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	<p>of the development as open space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cluster development reduces land preparation costs. <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Cluster Development</p>	these zoning categories.			
15	<p>Develop infill development ordinance/design guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An infill ordinance should specify design guidelines and maintain development standards to ensure compatibility. <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Infill Development Program</p>	To protect continuity of existing neighborhoods.			
16	<p>Include sidewalk requirements in ordinance/design guidelines to increase pedestrian activity and encourage outdoor or sidewalk dining in commercial areas.</p> <p>✍ See Illustration 2</p>				
17	<p>Encourage street connectivity in ordinance to alleviate reliance on major streets and increase travel options for pedestrians and vehicles.</p>	Will provide a more complete network of streets.			
18	<p>Reduce minimum street width requirements in residential areas.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Flexible Street Design Standards</p>	Travel speeds are too high on existing residential streets. Reduce amount of land dedicated to impervious surface. Improved neighborhood design.			
19	<p>Include traffic calming measures in design review.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Traffic Calming</p>	To reduce speeds and provide opportunity for more greenspace/landscaping. Particular attention should be given to residential			

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		development near major arterials.			
20	<p>Include transition buffers/side buffers in commercial districts to at least 10' including planting requirements.</p> <p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Right-of-way Improvements</p>				
21	<p>Develop screening requirements between land uses.</p> <p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Right-of-way Improvements</p>	Better separation of incompatible uses (e.g., General Commercial and Residential).			
22	<p>Strengthen existing sign regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised ordinance should include height restrictions tied to frontage of commercial developments. - Scenic corridors may require additional restrictions. <p>✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Targeted Corridor Redevelopment</p>	To better reduce visual clutter.			



Community Image & Vision

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
23	<p>Signage: Utilize the city's existing logo to direct visitors to Commerce and for directional signage for community features. The logo will become a recognizable image of Commerce.</p> <p> See Illustration 3</p>				
24	<p>Improve gateways, including landscaping and signage.</p> <p> See Illustration 4</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Right-of-way Improvements</p>	<p>Gateways of a community can have an impact on the number of visitors to a community.</p>			
25	<p>Entries from all points off of 441 Bypass need landscaping and signage indicating entry into Commerce. Use city logo.</p> <p> See Illustration 4</p>	<p>Visitors do not have any indication that City of Commerce is sitting off the bypass; they need to be directed to city offerings.</p>			
26	<p>Cluster development at corners of major intersections with entrances off the secondary roadways, creating attractive nodes. Revise goals/policies and Future Land Use map in city's comprehensive plan to reflect these changes.</p> <p> See Illustrations 5 & 6</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool</p>	<p>Minimizes potential traffic hazards associated with numerous curb cuts along major thoroughways; minimizes environmental impacts of large developments; enables greenspace to be preserved.</p>			

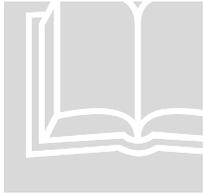
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	<u>Cluster Development</u>				
27	<p>Develop attractive commercial nodes at Bypass Gateway intersections, including appropriate landscaping. Revise goals, policies, objectives, and Future Land Use map in city’s comprehensive plan to reflect these changes.</p> <p> See Illustrations 5 & 6</p>	Clustering development: (1) invites people to drive into the community off the by-pass; (2) provides neighborhood commercial areas for developing fringe residential areas; (3) eliminates curb-cuts off 441 bypass; (4) minimizes storm water runoff; (5) uses existing infrastructure.			
28	<p>Improve visual impact of large parking lots by breaking them up with tree islands.</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool <u>Redesigning Off-Street Parking Facilities</u></p>	Creates a more pleasant view from the road and minimizes storm water impacts by reducing the amount of impervious surface.			
29	<p>Landscape along road next to cemetery, creating edge to cemetery.</p> <p> See Illustration 7</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool <u>Right-of-way Improvements</u></p>				
30	<p>Adopt design guidelines to ensure infill housing is compatible with the existing character of available housing in downtown areas, maintaining the appropriate style and size of existing units.</p> <p> See Illustration 8</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool <u>Infill Development Program</u></p>				
31	<p>Enhance existing community small-town image by encouraging infill residential development on scattered-site vacant lots throughout town.</p>	Will take advantage of previous infrastructure investment to prevent additional expenditures.			

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
	<p> See Illustration 8</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Infill Development Program</p>				
32	<p>Encourage conservation subdivisions.</p> <p> See Illustration 9</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Conservation Subdivision Ordinance</p>	Will help preserve the agricultural/rural heritage of Commerce.			
33	Establish a trail system to connect schools to each other and surrounding neighborhoods, with the new location of the middle school.	Will enable students to easily travel by foot or bike to school.			
34	Reuse existing structures.	Minimizes environmental impacts and economic impacts of infrastructure; reduces loss of greenspace.			
35	<p>Encourage developers to rehabilitate and maintain historic mill village residential areas by offering incentives. These incentives might include: Write-down of land acquisition costs; Property tax breaks; State and Federal tax incentives for rehabilitation of historic properties; Providing new public facilities or infrastructure to support the project; Waiver of specific requirements in local development regulations; Financial incentives, such as a low-interest revolving loan program; Mortgage buy-down program or down payment assistance for downtown housing.</p> <p>Investigate nomination of textile mill villages and residential areas for National Register of Historic Places, allowing the owners/developers to take advantage of</p>	Community was long supported by textile mills which have unfortunately disappeared (are disappearing), leaving associated residential neighborhoods. These would fit into the affordable/ workforce housing price range of \$80,000, allowing current residents to remain as well as attracting new residents.			

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	<p>the federal and state tax incentives to rehabilitate and repopulate.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Heritage Preservation Programs</p>				
36	<p>Protect the city’s rich architectural heritage. Consider passage of a preservation ordinance with zoning overlay district to protect historic integrity. Appoint a preservation commission.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Heritage Preservation Programs</p>	<p>This will entice tourist off the interstate, away from the outlets, provide a reason to come into town - something to see. Well-maintained historic architecture is a draw.</p>			
37	<p>Create tourism committee to promote historic traditions of Commerce-- mills, Cold Sassy Tree, railroad, etc.</p>	<p>Attracting tourism visitation from outlets into town will add to tax base- sales, hotel/motel, etc.</p>			
38	<p>Create Cold Sassy Tree play to perform at newly restored Opera House (like Swamp Gravy) even though possibly makes fun of community - use this to your benefit.</p>	<p>Creates a tourist destination to pull tax paying visitors into town.</p>			



Economic Development

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
39	<p>Develop a list of possible sites/buildings to be redeveloped as a restaurant.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Land Assembly for Redevelopment</p>	Accelerates possibility of recruiting a restaurant.			
40	<p>Create a restaurant recruiting team for downtown Commerce.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Choosing Businesses to Recruit and Support</p>	Focuses efforts on materials supplied by UGA Applied Research Division. A variety of restaurants spur growth in Commerce and forges links with Banks County shoppers.			
41	<p>Make a decision as to whether the city will attempt to recruit an entrepreneur to invest and open a restaurant or develop a building as a turn-key restaurant then recruit a chef to operate and or purchase on financing made available through the DDA.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tools Choosing Businesses to Recruit and Support and Surveying Business Needs</p>	It is easier to develop a building then recruit a chef with the option of financing a future purchase than it is to recruit someone to make a \$200,000 plus investment in downtown Commerce.			
42	<p>Identify and encourage a group of local citizens to revisit the issue of liquor by the</p>	Increases the odds of recruiting a restaurant. 35%			

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	drink in Commerce.	of the registered voters could call for a referendum or city council could call for a referendum supported by this group.			
43	Create a team to encourage development/marketing of Bed & Breakfast Inns. ✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Choosing Businesses to Recruit and Support	Provides a niche market for tourists shopping Banks Outlet Malls and downtown Commerce.			



Industrial Development

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
44	<p>Recognize that economic development encompasses broader perspectives than simply Industrial Recruitment; involves industrial, commercial, housing and even public development. Revise goals, policies and objectives in city’s Comprehensive Plan to reflect these changes.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tools Analyzing Existing Industry in the Local Economy, Choosing Businesses to Recruit and Support, Evaluating Business Formation in Your Community, Federal Programs Supporting Economic Development, Gathering Community Opinions on Economic Development, and Georgia Programs Supporting Economic Development</p>	<p>Quality of life within a community is the greatest catalyst to development.</p>			
45	<p>Build greater collaboration between the city and its partners for economic development: Jackson County, Jackson Industrial Development Authority, School systems, Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, etc.</p>	<p>The IDA and Jackson County are key promoters of the Commerce products. Synergy can be a productive benefit. Competition within the community is counter productive to good economic development and adversely impacts the perception of the community's quality of life.</p>			
46	<p>Pursue industry cluster strategies around current industry sectors: Transportation,</p>	<p>Infrastructure is currently available at the existing park.</p>			

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	Building/ Construction, Distribution, Hospitality/Tourism with a focus on building out the current industrial park.	Often, it is easier to attract comparable business adjacent or close to existing businesses.			
47	Focus on entrepreneurial development as a key component within the economic development program for the city and the Chamber of Commerce. ✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Georgia Programs Supporting Economic Development	Growing businesses and industries from within result in a long-term commitment to growth.			
48	The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce should develop a significant web presence. The chamber site should hyperlink to individual municipality or authority sites as appropriate.	Potential investors to the community will likely conduct basic research prior to visiting.			
49	Investigate the potential availability of and constraints on the "hidden workforce." Take measures to improve the future employability of the city's workforce. ✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tools Identifying Workforce Training Resources , Labor Market Information (LMI) Analysis , Matching Labor Needs and Training Resources , and Matching Labor Needs with Workforce Availability	City of Commerce schools focus on college-prep curriculum. Yet, the industrial/commercial establishments will need a trained workforce.			
50	Identify the first key area for future development, and then insure that proper infrastructure (gas, water/sewer, and roadways) is constructed.	Attending to a limited number of potential developments will ensure resources are available to support the progress.			
51	Engage existing and new businesses to determine whether they have any unmet needs. Conduct Business Retention and Expansion Study (BREP).	Current and new businesses consistently create more jobs and grow at a faster rate than newly attracted entities.			



Activity Centers & Commercial Nodes

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
52	<p>Direct anticipated commercial growth to four types of activity centers: Light Commercial/Residential, Mixed Commercial/Business/Residential, Commercial/Business/Industrial and Downtown Commercial. Amend goals, policies, objectives and Future Land Use map in the city's comprehensive plan to reflect these changes.</p> <p><i>See Illustration 1</i></p>	<p>To enhance aesthetic character of community. To create a safer, more pedestrian-friendly built environment. To optimize the long term fiscal health of community by reducing per capita costs of infrastructure provision and minimizing costs of environmental impacts.</p>			
53	<p>Identify appropriate intersections for the Light Commercial/Residential Activity Center. Direct the following types of land uses to these centers: Neighborhood markets interconnected with residential development. Amend goals, policies, objectives and Future Land Use map in the city's comprehensive plan to reflect these changes.</p> <p><i>See Illustration 1</i></p>	<p>To provide convenient amenities for residents in an attractive and coordinated design that reduces the need for automobile trips.</p>			
54	<p>Identify appropriate intersections for the Mixed Commercial/ Business/ Residential Activity Center. Direct the following types of land uses to these centers: Retail, Fast Food, Sit-down restaurants, Professional</p>	<p>To organize like-use commercial activities in a coordinated, aesthetically-pleasing design that allows for shared parking, pedestrian</p>			

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	<p>offices, gas/convenience stores, etc. Amend goals, policies, objectives and Future Land Use map in the city's comprehensive plan to reflect these changes.</p> <p> See Illustration 1</p>	interconnectivity, etc.			
55	<p>Identify appropriate intersections for the Commercial/Business/Industrial Activity Center. Direct the following types of land uses to these centers: Truck Stops, Fast Food, Motels, etc. Amend goals, policies, objectives and Future Land Use map in the city's comprehensive plan to reflect these changes.</p> <p> See Illustration 1</p>	To organize like-use commercial activities in a coordinated, aesthetically-pleasing design that allows for shared parking, pedestrian interconnectivity, etc.			
56	<p>Incorporate the entire Elm Street corridor into a Downtown Activity Center. Develop and apply overlay zone design standards to guide infill development.</p> <p> See Illustration 1</p>	To ensure that new development is compatible and consistent with the look of downtown.			
57	<p>Create a Downtown Activity Center: Expand redevelopment of Oxford Mill to incorporate a three or four story residential component.</p> <p> See Illustration 1</p>	To attract new residents from Athens university community who are seeking downtown living with a mountain view.			
58	<p>Create an Activity Center at the Old Wal-Mart: Revisit the proposed siting of Lanier Tech from the proposed by-pass location to the old Wal-Mart shopping center site.</p> <p> See Illustrations 10 & 11</p>	To add young adult population to the downtown activity center. To enhance southern gateway by replacing vacant strip shopping center with an attractive educational development proximate to downtown and nearby industrial area.			



Corridors

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
59	<p>Improve community “Image Corridors”: work with DOT to develop and implement an attractive design plan for high-speed roadways. This should include heavy landscaping with trees along the roadsides and a landscaped median, instead of paved turning lanes, separating opposing directions of traffic.</p> <p> See Illustration 12</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Targeted Corridor Redevelopment</p>	<p>Improve appearance of major highway corridors that define the community image. The DOT District One Office in Gainesville is Commerce’s local office for DOT. Todd Long can be reached at (770) 532-5526.</p>			
60	<p>Restrict the number of curb cuts along the high-speed corridors. Coordinate with DOT where these roads are also part of the state highway network. Take advantage of opportunities to close existing curb cuts whenever possible.</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Targeted Corridor Redevelopment</p>	<p>Improve traffic flow and safety; reduce congestion; improve functioning of arterial corridors.</p>			
61	<p>Prohibit deceleration lanes.</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Targeted Corridor Redevelopment</p>	<p>They make it more difficult to make streetscape improvements.</p>			

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62	<p>Develop a phased program for converting “suicide lanes” into landscaped medians with periodic left turn lanes.</p> <p> See Illustration 13</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Targeted Corridor Redevelopment</p>	<p>Landscaped center medians are more attractive and safer, but handle just as much traffic, as long as they incorporate extra turn lanes at important intersections.</p>			
63	<p>Adopt more restrictive sign regulations that limit the size and number of signs and spell out design details. Revise goals, policies and objectives in city’s Comprehensive Plan to reflect these changes.</p> <p>Ideally, sign sizes and setbacks should be tied to road widths and driving speeds:</p> <p>Maximum heights: 4-6 lane streets: 12 feet 2 lane streets: 8 feet</p> <p>Maximum sign areas: <35 mph: 32 square feet 35-45 mph: 42 square feet >45 mph: 64 square feet</p> <p>Sign setbacks 10 feet for buildings more than 50 feet from curb No freestanding sign for buildings closer than 50 feet from curb</p> <p>Revise goals, policies and objectives in</p>	<p>Provide a unified look to Commerce signs, enhancing visitors’ and residents’ sense of place.</p>			

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	<p>city’s Comprehensive Plan to reflect these changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Refer to “Sign Control for Rural Corridors: Model Provisions and Guidance Manual” for important issues concerning sign ordinances and be certain to obtain legal counsel for any ordinance changes. ✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Targeted Corridor Redevelopment 				
64	<p>Re-evaluate existing zoning along major corridors. Reduce the amount of commercial zoning where possible or shift zoning districts. To avoid downzoning conflicts, consider adoption of overlays to encourage properties already zoned for commercial development to be developed as mixed-use Planned Unit Developments instead. Amend goals, policies, objectives and Future Land Use map in city’s comprehensive plan to reflect these changes.</p>	<p>This will help promote nodal commercial concentrations at intervals along these roadways, versus strip commercial development.</p>			
65	<p>Encourage redevelopment of existing commercial centers.</p> <p>✍ See Illustration 14</p>	<p>Upgrade corridor appearance where commercial clutter has already happened.</p>			
66	<p>Acquire marginal or poorly maintained properties and offer them for new development that is consistent with the community’s redevelopment plan for the area. (Use powers granted under the Georgia Urban Redevelopment Law).</p>	<p>The brief period while property is in public ownership (between acquisition and sale to a new developer) is an opportunity to clean up the property by removing non-conforming signs, demolishing unattractive buildings, or eliminating</p>			

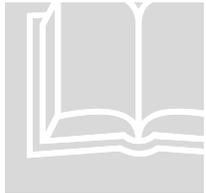
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	✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Land Assembly for Redevelopment	unnecessary curb cuts and paving.			
67	Encourage new developments to incorporate neo-traditional design elements, particularly connective grid street patterns (vs. cul-de-sacs). ✍ See Illustrations 15 & 16	Such elements offer alternatives to forcing all traffic onto the nearest arterial.			
68	Take advantage of opportunities to build new street connections, particularly in older commercial and industrial areas.	Reduces traffic on major arterials.			
69	Establish maximum building setback requirements for new development (pull buildings closer to the street) and require sidewalks.	Improves pedestrian access and walkability.			
70	Consider establishing minimum floor-area ratios, requiring new commercial centers to build up, not out.	Two-story shopping centers consume less land, are more pedestrian friendly and can be very attractive.			
71	Amend local parking standards, including display lots at car dealerships and similar establishments to: Establish MAXIMUM parking requirements based on appropriate "smart growth" standards. Require a large percentage of parking be located on the rear or to the side of the buildings they serve. Require parking lots to include a	Decrease impervious surface area, improve the appearance of commercial properties and increase walkability and pedestrian accessibility.			

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
	<p>landscaped buffer along the street frontage, sides and rear.</p> <p>Require parking lots on separate properties to be interconnected (to reduce the need for multiple curb cuts).</p> <p>Require raised pedestrian walkways between rows of parking spaces in large parking lots.</p> <p> See Illustrations 17, 18, & 19</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Redesigning Off-Street Parking Facilities</p>				
72	<p>Continue streetscape improvements.</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Right-of-way Improvements</p>	Make pedestrian corridors safer, more accessible and more attractive.			
73	<p>Landscape roadside rights-of-way with trees.</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Right-of-way Improvements</p>	Softens the harsh appearance of strip development.			
74	<p>Seek street-front landscaping easements from property owners; in exchange for granting the easement, provide free landscaping.</p> <p> See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Right-of-way Improvements</p>	Enhance the visual appeal of the property and the entire corridor.			
75	<p>Improve street lighting by replacing sodium vapor lights where possible.</p>	Alternatives are more attractive.			

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	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
76	Relocate utilities off the street frontage or underground.				
77	Plant street trees (hardwoods).				
78	Hang street banners from lightposts.				
79	Provide benches and trash receptacles.				
80	Create 10 foot landscaped buffers to shield parking lots from view. ✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Redesigning Off-Street Parking Facilities				
81	Install traffic calming devices, including raised pedestrian crossings, curb bump-outs, and on-street parking along the length of the street. ✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Traffic Calming				
82	Seek funding for streetscape improvements (cost estimate: \$200 to \$300 per linear foot) from Georgia DOT TEA program.				



Housing

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
83	<p>Create a Housing Master Plan for redevelopment of the Johnstown area.</p> <p>Organize willing residents, pastors, business owners in the Johnstown area to develop a vision, a revitalization strategy, for their neighborhood.</p>	<p>Neighborhood prioritization of redevelopment efforts.</p> <p>A large percentage of existing structures are in need of some level of repair.</p>			
	<p>Establish a non-profit Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) to begin working on redevelopment of the Johnstown area.</p>	<p>Mobile homes have replaced single-family houses.</p>			
	<p>Establish a revolving loan pool for low/no interest loans for façade treatments and repairs, using sources such as: Appalachian Region Business Development Revolving Loan Fund and local banks needing Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) activities.</p>	<p>Numerous substandard structures, to include mobile homes and single family.</p>			
	<p>Aggressively enforce code and health violations.</p>	<p>Open ditches on side to road, forcing residents to walk in the roadway.</p>			

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
	<p>Aggressively acquire property that is available.</p> <p>Establish a land bank to assist in clearing title on property.</p> <p>Encourage maximum preservation of trees and mature landscaping.</p> <p>Build sidewalks within the neighborhood to replace the open ditches.</p> <p>Relocate owners/landlords willing to sell and develop property accordingly.</p> <p>Establish architectural standards for the redevelopment.</p> <p>Insure mixed income use of the replacement units.</p> <p>Work with developers to maximize the view shed and provide replacement housing for those residents willing to temporarily relocate.</p> <p>Encourage the Housing Authority to modernize units at Bellview Homes.</p> <p>✂ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Toolkit of Best Practices</p>	<p>Lack of identity and continuity.</p> <p>Some incompatible commercial encroachment.</p> <p>Encourages pedestrian traffic in neighborhood and provides safe access to local shopping and downtown.</p> <p>Open ditches on side to road forces residents to walk in the roadway.</p>			
84	<p>Halt incompatible commercial encroachment inside neighborhoods allow commercial development on the</p>	<p>Incompatible uses (chickens and pigs next to appliance repair storage, homes on either side).</p>			

	Recommendation	Why Necessary	Status	Responsible Party	Notes
	corridor road only.				
85	Investigate neighborhood edges that are zoned commercial due to proximity of commercial corridor and bring them back to conformance by making zoning consistent with current residential use.	Properties may be located along corridors or near downtown business district.			
86	Develop landscape requirements for Infill Development whether for single family, cluster, or multi-family.	Victorian Oaks is a good example of a dense development with appropriate amount of landscaping.			
87	Enforce existing codes to reduce number of substandard housing units.	Conduct routine inspections and enforce penalties for violations.			
88	Identify areas in the community for higher residential density. ✘ See Georgia Quality Growth Partnership Tool Creative Design for Higher Density	New workforce housing is needed, but should be compatible to existing neighborhoods. Make workforce housing a component of the Housing Master Plan.			

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